



As with many things, who you know and learning the unspoken rules is what helps you the most. Getting to know teachers, school staff, and other parents is invaluable. “I still get intimidated at times, especially when enrolling a new student or when my kids change teachers,” says one veteran parent. “But it helps that I have a good relationship with the office staff.”

# CANS CORNER

Eve Altizer & Rebecca Hollister  
Child and Family Division  
Supervisors

## Why Are You Calling?

Hello Caregivers! Some of you may have gotten a call regarding your experience with the CANS and been asked to give a rating as to your participation and understanding. If you have a child in your care and a CANS was completed the previous month – you will most likely get a call asking for your feedback. If you haven't yet – don't worry – you will! As Caregivers, your input and feedback regarding your experience and understanding of the use of the CANS is EXTREMELY important, so we want to make sure that we are connecting with you so that we can do the very best work that we can! Overall, the purpose is not to look specifically at your case or your social worker but how we can improve the quality of the CANS as a whole within the agency. There's a committee that is focusing on this – including foster parents and social workers and management on the committee all trying to improve how the CANS is used so we can better serve our families. Some of the questions you will be asked are, "I understand how the CANS assessment works and why it is important to the child placed with me and my family.", "The CANS assessment was carried out like a two-way conversation (between the social worker and you).", "Our CANS ratings (answers to CANS questions) were helpful in setting goals and planning our treatment and/or services collaboratively (together) with the social worker.", and "I think the treatment and services we have planned will work because they address our needs and strengths." We would like to take a moment to say THANK YOU for those of you who have received calls and taken the time to give us your feedback – we definitely appreciate it! And for those who will get a call in the future – we would love to hear from you about your experiences surrounding the CANS!

## Trick or Treat

**Big Bend (Village)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Brookfield (City)** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 7:30pm  
**Brookfield (Town)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Butler** – October 31 – 2:00pm – 4:00pm  
**Delafield (Business)** – October 24 – 5:00pm – 7:00pm  
**Delafield (City & Town)** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Eagle (Town & Village)** – October 31 – 4:00pm – 6:00pm  
**East Troy** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 7:30pm  
**Elm Grove** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 7:30pm  
**Genesee (Town)** – October 25 – 4:00pm – 7:00pm  
**Hartland** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Hartland (Business)** – October 22 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Lake Mills** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Menomonee Falls** – October 31 – 5:30pm – 7:30pm  
**Merton** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Mukwonago (Town & Village)** – October 25 – 4:00pm – 6:00pm  
**Muskego (City)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Nashotah** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 8:00pm  
**New Berlin** – October 31 – 4:00pm – 7:00pm  
**North Prairie** – October 31 – 4:00pm – 6:00pm  
**Oconomowoc (Business)** – October 31 – 1:00pm – 4:00pm  
**Oconomowoc (City & Town)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Pewaukee (Business)** – October 24 – 12:00pm – 2:00pm  
**Pewaukee (City)** – October 31 – 3:00pm – 7:00pm  
**Pewaukee (Village)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Summit (Village)** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Sussex** – October 31 – 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Vernon (Town)** – October 25 – 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
**Wales (Village)** – October 31 – 4:00pm – 6:00pm  
**Watertown** – October 31 – 3:00pm – 6:00pm  
**Waukesha (City & Town)** – October 31 – 5:00pm – 7:00pm

# FAMILY HIGHLIGHT

## The Langreder Family

Alex & Jim Langreder have been foster parents with Waukesha County for the past 15 years. Early on, they knew they wanted to help children facing difficulties. Over the years, they have had approximately 12 children in their care and adopted 3 amazing kids. Elliott is a loving 9-year-old boy with special needs. Alex and Jim find it gratifying for him to be given the opportunity to learn and grow at his own pace and are delighted that he has surpassed all developmental expectations. Bella is a happy and delightful 5-year-old little girl. Adam is 9-years-old and the newest member of the family, having been adopted by Alex and Jim on August 14, 2015. He had been living with a family who changed their minds about adopting him. Alex and Jim were so touched by his story that they immediately accepted him into their family. When they saw how loving and protective he is of Elliott, they knew he was a perfect fit for the family. Adam loves being big brother to Elliott and Bella.

Ten years ago, they fostered two brothers, ages 18 months and 4 years old. The boys were reunited with their mother after one year and now, 10 years later, they remain in contact with Jim and Alex who recognize that although their current life circumstances could be better, the stability they were given while in their home has been of great benefit to the boys.

Jim and Alex make every effort to focus on the present and appreciate each day. They work well together by having adjustable and opposite work schedules. Of course, this does come at a cost of spending less time together than they would like, but they feel they are making the extra effort for their family. They have been able to spend quality time with each of the children without having to utilize much daycare.



The charming and inviting nature of Alex and Jim has resulted in people being drawn to them and the kids. They have many close friends, many of whom are teachers, co-workers, neighbors and those who have provided therapeutic assistance for Elliott's autism and maintain contact with the family. They live the philosophy of "It takes a village" and although they never expect assistance, this is what keeps them going. Alex stated, "We don't know how to be a client and not be your friend. We don't know how to have foster kids and not treat them like our own." Not surprisingly, theirs is the destination home for all the kids in the neighborhood to come to play.

This fall the family will be taking a much anticipated first trip to Disney World. It wouldn't be surprising if Mickey & Minnie want to come back home with them!

We thank Alex and Jim for their years of longevity as foster parents for Waukesha County and all they have given to improve the lives of children.

## Helping Achieve School Success

Continued from page 1

☼ *Planning for school routines before school starts.* A few weeks before school starts, begin regular bedtimes, meals, and after school routines. For children who come into your home during the school year, get them into a routine a few days before they start school.

☼ *Advocating for children in care.* As a foster parent, you know the needs of the child in your care. The child's parents also provide additional insights that can be beneficial to share with the school staff. It's okay to advocate for what your child needs to be successful in school.

### Homework

Designating a homework space and time can help your child stay in a routine and keep a consistent schedule. Some children in care seem to struggle with school work. This may be because of a lack of attendance at school, early trauma, frequent moves, or any number of other reasons. Following are some suggestions to try to help with homework.

☼ *Break homework into smaller steps.* Sometimes breaking things into smaller steps alleviates stress and anxiety, and keeps students better focused. For example, instead of having your child work on 20 math problems, have him work on five at a time.

☼ *Remember where your child is at developmentally.* Your child may not be working at the same level as other kids his age. Your child is unique, and may learn in a more non-traditional way.

☼ *Develop realistic expectations and celebrate accomplishments.* Meet your child where he is and celebrate his accomplishments.

☼ *Teach organizational skills.* Develop a system for school work going back and forth between home and school. For example, use different colored folders and notebooks for different classes or subjects.

☼ *Consider a mentor or a tutor.* A lot of schools have older children who assist younger children with school work. Perhaps your child could be involved with organizations, like the YMCA or Big Brothers and Big Sisters, that provide mentors. Also check with people at your school to see if they can recommend a tutor if needed.

☼ *Try to keep in mind that some assignments may be emotionally taxing.* Assignments about family trees, Child of the Week, holidays, Mother's Day, and Father's Day are just a few that may be triggers for your child.

School can be a wonderful experience for your child. He may build healthy connections to teachers, coaches, counselors, and other staff members. Friends and learning social skills are also a good emotional support for him.

But school is sometimes one of the biggest stressors for children and parents alike. Don't hesitate to call us at **1-800-947-8074** for support, understanding, and resources.

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## Clothing Closet Corner



The Foster Care Clothing Closet is a resource established to help meet the clothing needs of children placed in foster care and is available to all resource families. If you have a child placed in your home, please contact your social worker to make arrangements to visit the clothing closet.

We have had a steady stream of donations coming in particularly for younger children and are running out of room. We are currently looking for donations of clothing for older children/teens. If you have a donation you would like to make for this population, please contact Susan Peck at 262-896-8574.



### Can Teachers Help Your Foster Child?

One of the greatest ways a teacher can help a foster child is with academic understanding. Many teachers expect good grades and school performance to be a priority in the lives of the majority of their students. Yet, for children in foster care, school is not a priority, and is not a focus. Instead, the main focus and priority for many of student who are placed into foster homes is that of survival; survival from moving from home to home, survival from the abuse and neglect they may have faced in their lives, survival from living apart from their other family members, and survival from moving from school to school. As foster children are often behind academically, as well as struggle with the fact that they are coming from outside school districts with different expectations, teachers need to be conscious of this fact. There are sure to be gaps in learning and disabilities due to the instability and multiple displacements. In addition, foster children struggle with many personal and emotional issues while in the foster home, and homework is often not the main objective while in the home each evening. Instead, the emotional issues your child faces may take center stage on a particular evening. Teachers need to assign homework with this in mind, being sensitive to their issues. School educators should avoid assigning school tasks and projects that are insensitive to children in foster care. These might include projects which ask for students to write about a mother or father before Mother's/Father's Day, bringing in pictures from home, tracing a family tree, or reporting on a family member that is an inspiration.

Along with this, teachers should be cautious when assigning homework that there is someone who is at home who can be of help and assistance. Teachers can also create lesson plans with them in mind and engage in daily conversation that incorporates the student. Finally, teachers can be of tremendous help to both foster children and foster parents by allowing flexibility on deadlines and due dates for homework, as well as quiz and test taking, particularly when assigning home work or test dates around visitations with birth parents and biological family members. Often, children in care are filled with various anxieties and on the day of a visitation, as well as the following day, as they try to process the swirling emotions that come with visiting with someone who may have neglected or abused them, or a family member in jail. Furthermore, sometimes these visitations lead to false promises and false hopes of being reunited soon with birth family members; promise and hopes that leave the children incapable of completing homework and studying for quizzes and tests in an appropriate and focused manner.

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<http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com>

# Training and Events



## Training Offered By Waukesha County

### Parent Café

Parent Café's are an educational opportunity for parents to come together and deal with the stressors, worries and challenges of parenting in a supportive environment.

**October 6, 2015; and December 1, 2015**  
**5:30 PM to 8:00 PM**

**Center for Excellence**  
 N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha  
 To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-521-0317.

### Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

**November 17, 2015**  
**6:00 PM to 7:00 PM**

**Parents Place**  
 1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI

Free childcare available. Please call Parents Place to reserve your spot at 262-549-5575.

Waukesha County Relative Resource Families  
 Please RSVP to Janis (262-548-7267) or Libby (262-548-7277)

### Foster Parent Support Group

**First Wednesday of each month**  
**October 7, 2015**

**6:00 PM to 7:30 PM**  
**Parents Place**  
 1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI  
 262-549-5575

On-sight daycare is available, but you must register in advance to secure a slot as there may be a cut-off depending on the number of children.

### Support Group For Dads

This is a new group to enhance group members' experience as fathers. Topics of discussion will include coping with stress; developing a better relationship with partner/spouse/child's mother; identifying positive role models in your life; identifying how you are a positive role model for your child(ren); discussing your role as a father and what you would like to change or improve.

**Fourth Tuesday of each month**  
**October 27, 2015**

**6:00PM - 7:30PM**  
**Parents Place**  
 1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI  
 262-549-5575

## Waukesha County Foster Parent Orientation

Waukesha Department of Health and Human Services invites you to attend a foster parent orientation meeting. These meetings are open to anyone who is interested in learning about our foster care program. **If you are currently in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent, you are required to attend an orientation session prior to approval of your foster care license.**

We encourage you to complete the online foster parent pre-placement training prior to attending this information session. The training can be found online at <http://wcwpds.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training/>. Please save the certificates after you have completed each module. These are required to become licensed.

### When:

October 13, 2015; November 10, 2015; and December 8, 2015  
 All orientation sessions occur from 6:00 - 8:00 PM

**Where:** Human Services Center, 514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

To register for an orientation session, contact your foster care coordinator.

## Training

**Parents Place Programs**  
**262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org**

- **Co-Parenting**  
Mondays, October 5 - 26; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **It's All About Teens (Parent and Teen Class)**  
Mondays, September 14 - October 26; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Unlock the Secrets to Discipline**  
Tuesdays, October 6 - 20; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Parenting the Early Years Series**  
Wednesdays, September 2 - October 28; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Social Skills/Self Esteem (Parent and Child Class)**  
Wednesdays, October 7 & 14; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Mindfulness**  
Wednesdays, October 21 & 28; 5:30 - 7:00 PM

**Coalition for Children**  
**[www.coalitionforcyf.org](http://www.coalitionforcyf.org)**

For other training opportunities, see the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families website: [www.coalitionforcyf.org](http://www.coalitionforcyf.org). They offer interactive webinars that count toward the required face to face training hours.

## Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County  
 Health & Human Services  
 262-548-7212

Eve Altizer, Supervisor  
 262-548-7272

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor  
 262-548-7271

Vickie Smith, Supervisor  
 262-970-4761

Janis Ramos, Foster Care Coord.  
 262-548-7267

Susan Peck, Foster Care Coord.  
 262-896-8574

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing  
 262-548-7277

## Social Workers:

Tracy Clark ..... 262-548-7270

Megan Fishler ..... 262-896-8570

Laura Jahnke ..... 262-548-7359

Jamie Kasten ..... 262-548-7265

Becca Kuester ..... 262-896-6857

Jessica Larsen ..... 262-548-7346

Melissa Lipovsek ..... 262-548-7348

Maria Maurer ..... 262-548-7345

Chelsey Nisbet ..... 262-896-6896

Rachel O'Sullivan ..... 262-548-7639

Stacy Pawlak ..... 262-548-7262

Eugenio  
 Quantro-Plaga ..... 262-548-7684

Michael Reed ..... 262-548-7347

Elizabeth Russo ..... 262-548-7349

Kim Sampson ..... 262-548-7273

Linda Senger ..... 262-548-7698

## Kinship Workers:

Linda Finn ..... 262-548-7254

Jessica Morris ..... 262-548-7256

**Children's Mental Health Outreach**  
 262-548-7666

**Medical Emergency:** 911  
**Family Emergency:** 211

**Foster Parent Mentor**  
 Jen Mersfelder ..... 262-542-2926  
 David Mersfelder ..... 262-542-2926

## August 2015 Placements

### Waukesha County Licensed Homes

Relative/Kinship/Level 1 Placements:  
 42 Children

Level 2 Placements:  
 38 Children

### Waukesha County Children in Out of Home Placement

Juvenile Corrections:	1 Child	Group Homes:	0 Children
Residential Care Facilities:	9 Children	Shelter Care	0 Children
Relative/Kinship Level 1 Foster Homes:	50 Children	Treatment Foster Homes:	0 Children
Level 2 Foster Homes:	99 Children	Inpatient Hospital:	0 Children
		Total Children in OHC:	93 Children

**If an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect has been made against you, please call:**

**FASPP**  
 Norma Schoenberg  
 920-922-9627